United Nations A/65/253

General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 August 2010

Original: English

Sixty-fifth session
Item 26 of the provisional agenda*
Agriculture development and food security

Agriculture development and food security

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Two years after the 2008 food crisis, food insecurity persists in 29 countries worldwide, and more than one billion people remain hungry or undernourished. However, concerted efforts by the global community to coordinate actions for food and nutrition assistance and to provide increased resources for sustainable agricultural development, along with country-led policy initiatives that include farmers' organizations and are supported by regional and international strategies, have contributed to stronger social safety nets and improved support for smallholder farmers.

* A/65/150.

10-47762 (E) 270810

Please recycle

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	3
II.	Agriculture and food security situation	3
	A. Overview of the current status	4
	B. Ongoing and emerging challenges	6
III.	Responding to the food security crisis and agricultural development challenges	8
	A. Actions taken at the global level	8
	B. Progress at the regional level	15
	C. National policies and measures for sustainable agriculture and food security	17
IV.	The way forward: maintaining the global momentum on a comprehensive approach to achieve food security through agricultural development	20

I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in response to the request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/224 that the Secretary-General submit to the Assembly at its sixty-fifth session a report on developments related to global efforts to address agriculture development and food security, including progress in implementing the outcome of the World Summit on Food Security, under the item entitled "Agriculture development and food security".

2. The report benefited from inputs received from the Secretary-General's High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, including reports of the Senior Steering Group of the Task Force. The information and analysis presented in the *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action* developed by the Task Force in July 2010, the *Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development-Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Agricultural Outlook 2010-2019*, and the views and recommendations of African farmers' organizations in the context of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), compiled by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), contribute additional substance. The follow-up actions by Governments and other stakeholders aimed at implementing the decisions taken during the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development pertaining to agriculture and rural development also inform the report.

3. Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food as defined above. Food security therefore covers availability, access, utilization and stability issues, and, because of its focus on the characteristics of individuals, also encompasses the energy, protein and nutrient requirements for life, activity, pregnancy, growth and long-term capabilities.

II. Agriculture and food security situation

4. Following the food and financial crises, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) reported in their 2009 publication *The State of Food Insecurity in the World*[1] that for the first time since 1970 more than one billion people were hungry or undernourished worldwide — in other words, that about one sixth of all of humanity suffered from a lack of food security.

5. Several factors converged to make 2009 a particularly damaging year for people at risk of food insecurity. The food crisis had pushed the prices of basic staples beyond the reach of millions of poor people. Many families were especially vulnerable to the rising prices, as they were net food buyers. The price increases forced many poor families to make compromises, such as replacing more nutritious food with food that is less nutritious, selling productive assets, withdrawing children from school, forgoing health care or education, or simply eating less. While the food

[1] FAO, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World*, Rome, 2009; available at http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i0876e/i0876e00.HTM.

price index for 2009 was on average 17 per cent lower than the 2008 average, prices remained 11 per cent higher than in 2007. While the global focus on food prices has waned, domestic staple food prices in several countries experienced double-digit increases in 2009, in particular in sub-Saharan Africa, where a sample of 55 countries covered by the FAO domestic food price survey shows that some countries have experienced the largest price increases in staples in their local markets. The impact on undernourishment, or hunger, has been estimated at nearly 8 per cent in 2009.[2]

6. The world financial crisis reduced the capacity of finance ministers in the least developed countries to respond to the needs of their poorer populations. Many countries experienced across-the-board drops in their trade and financial inflows and saw reductions in their export earnings, inward investment by foreign enterprises, receipts of development aid, remittances from citizens living abroad and income from taxes. Fortunately, Governments are responding to the crisis by investing in agriculture and infrastructure and expanding safety nets.

A. Overview of the current status

7. The FAO publication *Crop Prospects and Food Situation* (May 2010) projects that food prices in developing countries will remain above the pre-crisis level of early 2008, negatively affecting access to food by vulnerable populations. Furthermore, food difficulties persist in 29 countries worldwide, particularly in the Niger, Chad and other Sahelian countries of West Africa, where food assistance is needed for the 2009-2010 marketing season.[3]

8. The *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2010-2019* reports that international commodity prices are anticipated to be higher on average in the next decade, compared with the decade preceding the price spike of 2007-2008. This forecast is based on the resumption of economic growth, above all in developing countries; increased demand due to rising biofuels production; and anticipated higher costs of energy-related inputs. Average wheat and coarse-grain prices are projected to be nearly 15 to 40 per cent higher in real terms relative to 1997-2006, while for vegetable oils real prices are expected to be more than 40 per cent higher. For livestock products, average meat prices in real terms, other than for pig meat, are expected to surpass the 1997-2006 average in the coming decade, initially owing to lower supplies, higher feed costs and rising demand. Average dairy prices in real terms are expected to be 16 to 45 per cent higher in 2010-2019 relative to 1997-2006, with butter prices showing the greatest gains, followed by energy and vegetable-oil prices. As shown in figure I, real commodity prices are projected to remain below recent peaks but well above those of the previous decade.[4]

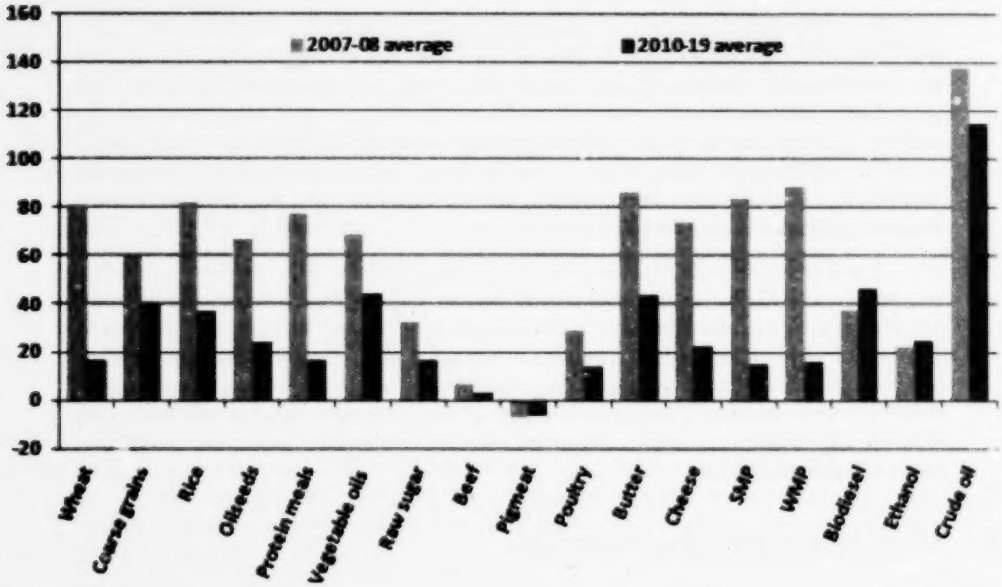
---

[2] World Bank, Food Price Watch, February 2010; available at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPOVERTY/Resources/335642-1210859591030/FINAL_Food_Price_Watch_Feb2010.pdf.

[3] Global Information and Early Warning System, "Crop Prospects and Food Situation", No. 2, May 2010. http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/ak347e/ak347e00.pdf.

[4] *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2010-2019*, available at http://www.agri-outlook.org/dataoecd/13/13/45438527.pdf.

Figure I
Real commodity prices, 2007-2008 and 2010-2019 (projected)



9. The *Outlook* net production index[5] provides a summary measure of the growth in the gross value of production of all commodities included in the report, net of seed and feed costs which are internal to the sector, all measured at constant international reference prices of 2004-2006. Brazil is the fastest-growing agricultural sector by far, projected to grow by over 40 per cent until 2019, compared with the 2007-2009 base period. The Russian Federation and Ukraine are projected to grow 26 per cent and 29 per cent, provided that the plans made and support measures taken by the respective Governments proceed as indicated and bear fruit, marking a significant recovery in production levels.

10. China and India may also grow significantly, by 26 and 21 per cent, respectively. While Australia is projected to grow some 17 per cent, such growth reflects an assumed return to more normal yields; over a longer period of comparison, Australian production by 2019 will be only some 7 per cent higher than in 2000. Production growth in the United States of America and Canada is projected to be in the 10 to 15 per cent range over the same period.

11. In contrast, over the same period, net agricultural output in the 27 member countries of the European Union will have grown less than 4 per cent. These diverse trends reflect important developments in those countries which may be generating or inhibiting growth.

12. By region, production measures, on a per capita basis, provide an interesting viewpoint on longer-term developments in global agriculture and their potential implications for food supplies. Per capita output has fallen in North Africa and the

[5] Ibid.

Middle East, owing largely to limited water availability and the policies adopted by certain countries, such as Saudi Arabia, aimed at reducing highly subsidized wheat production. Production in the sub-Saharan region of Africa is expected to be stagnant in per capita terms, as production is barely keeping pace with population growth, which still averages around 2.2 per cent per year.

13. In Western Europe, production is also stagnant. Requirements related to growth in consumption on a per capita basis in this region will need to be met by imports. Latin America is the fastest-growing production region; however, in per capita terms, Eastern Europe is the fastest-growing, because projections assume that in that region, population numbers will actually decline by more than 3 per cent over the projected period of 2010-2019.

14. Trade flows and trade patterns in agricultural products also continue to evolve, with increased South-South trade in addition to the traditional North-South trade. On the import side, the developing countries are becoming increasingly integrated into world agricultural trade and regional markets. Other countries, including China, that have a well-established presence in international markets are seeking to diversify their sources of supply, resulting in new economic interactions and trade between developing and other countries that are effectively reshaping worldwide flows of agricultural trade.[6]

B. Ongoing and emerging challenges

15. The food and financial crises demonstrated that the structure and functioning of food markets was too fragile to withstand the impact of successive shocks. This reflects a history of inappropriate policies on effective land use and food production; decades of under-investment in agriculture (particularly smallholder-based production and processing systems), rural development and infrastructure; inconsistent attention to the effective operation of markets for food; and lack of support for safety nets and social protection systems.

16. Despite the recent fallback in world prices, domestic food prices and price volatility remain high. Poorer people are particularly affected by fluctuations in the prices of food as well as in the costs of inputs and transport. High price volatility complicates farmers' choices of which crops to grow and what type of livestock to purchase, resulting in increased levels of food insecurity among poor people. Volatility also undermines confidence in global systems with respect to maintaining prices and securing supplies in times of need.

17. The crises highlighted the vulnerability of the nearly half a billion small-scale food producers and the millions of waged agricultural workers involved in agriculture, and of poor people who live in urban areas. Vulnerabilities are particularly pronounced in countries experiencing, or recovering from, breakdowns in political systems, including civil strife or warfare. The capacity of smallholder farms to grow more food is constrained because they lack access to soil and water management practices that are adapted to their eco-ecological zone and cannot

[6] Ibid.

afford quality seeds[7] or inputs such as fertilizer, veterinary drugs[8] and services. This can result in an expansion of the area used for agriculture to less suitable lands, with severe consequences for the ecosystems around the community.

18. The vulnerability of women farmers, who are responsible for about half of food production worldwide and 60 to 80 per cent in most developing countries, has also become increasingly visible. Such women constitute the majority of smallholder farmers in developing countries. Despite the significant contribution made by women to food production, their ability to ensure food and nutrition security within their households and communities is impeded by their lack of access to land, technology, training and extension services, marketing services and credit. Inequalities are exacerbated by biases in development policies, discriminatory legislation, long-standing traditions and lack of access to decision makers.

19. While interest has grown among Governments and private investors in acquiring land in third countries for staple food and other agricultural commodities, a 2010 study on large land acquisitions in Africa[9] highlights a number of misconceptions about what have been termed "land grabs". It found that land-based investment has been rising over the past five years, but that while foreign investment dominates, domestic investors are also playing a major role in land acquisitions. Large-scale land claims involve only a small proportion of arable land in any one country, but, contrary to widespread perception, there is very little "empty" land, as most remaining suitable land is already under use or claim, often by local people.

20. Overall, the crises have exposed the inadequacy of the current systems and institutions, including those that govern world food trade, to respond to the needs of poor people affected by substantial shocks and highlight the need for improved global governance of world food security. At the national level, anxiety about high food prices and intense competition over land, water and transport capacity have already increased the risks of civil unrest, political instability, the displacement of people and migration across borders. Continued food price volatility, which is increasingly tied to unstable energy prices, and a lack of infrastructure for market access tend to increase risks to profitability and livelihoods, especially of smallholder farmers. Pressure on the environment, including from the impacts of climate change and increasingly frequent extreme weather events on agricultural production and food systems, will tend to increase the risks of food insecurity in coming decades and add to the demands for humanitarian action and capacity-building for adaptation.

21. Finally, the continued expansion of biofuels production to meet mandated uses will create additional demand for maize, wheat, coarse grains, vegetable oils and sugar used as feedstocks. Biofuels markets depend heavily on government incentives and mandates, but prospects remain uncertain, owing to unpredictable

---

[7] Quality seed can be of scientifically bred varieties but also of local farmer varieties or landraces, depending on what is most appropriate and cost-effective under the circumstances.

[8] In many countries, animals are an important source of power for ploughing, harvesting and transport, and of food and nutrition. Animals can also serve as an informal means of saving and generating cash for input, investment and food purchases.

[9] FAO and the International Institute for Environment and Development, *Making the most of agricultural investment: A survey of business models that provide opportunities for smallholders*, 2010, available at http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdfs/12566IIED.pdf.

factors such as future trends in crude oil prices, changes in policy interventions and developments in second-generation technologies.[4]

III. Responding to the food security crisis and agricultural development challenges

A. Actions taken at the global level

22. The food crisis of 2008 served as a catalyst for an unprecedented level of global action to provide emergency food aid and revitalize the agriculture sector. Following the establishment of the High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis and its Comprehensive Framework for Action in July 2008, the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, established in July 2009, helped to increase the necessary resources in the lead-up to the 2009 World Summit on Food Security, at which the Rome Principles were adopted and FAO undertook a fundamental reform of its Committee on World Food Security.

23. The present section provides a brief update on these and other international efforts to mobilize a coordinated response to the crisis and address the underlying weaknesses in the agricultural sectors of the most vulnerable countries. Of particular interest this year is the increased focus on nutrition across the spectrum of efforts to address food security.

High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis

24. The High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis works to ensure the coherence of policies, action and the delivery of results among United Nations system agencies, international financial institutions and their partners in support of comprehensive food security strategies that are country-owned and country-driven.[10] The Task Force is working towards the implementation of the Comprehensive Framework for Action, which outlines a twin-track approach to meeting the immediate needs of the most vulnerable while fostering the longer-term sustainable development of the agricultural sector in more than 60 countries.

25. The 22 members of the High-level Task Force[11] have collectively committed in excess of $2 billion of their own funds and mobilized in excess of $6 billion to relieve the impact of soaring food prices in over 90 countries. They have contributed to improved donor coordination, aid alignment and harmonization, with a view to ensuring predictable, efficient and effective responses at the country level. They

[10] Information on the Task Force and its members is available at: http://www.un-foodsecurity.org/.

[11] FAO, IFAD, the International Labour Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Special Adviser on the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Public Information, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the World Bank, WFP, the World Health Organization and the World Trade Organization.

have supported smallholder farmer food production, benefiting approximately 5 per cent of the world's 2 billion smallholder farming families; supported more than 15 Governments in their fiscal and tax policy responses to increased food prices by providing guidance and financial resources so as to limit a possible second-round impact of price rises on inflation; and helped to significantly mitigate the macroeconomic challenges faced by poorer countries as a result of volatile food prices.[12]

Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action

26. The Comprehensive Framework for Action initially prioritized the interests of smallholder farmers, especially women, helping them to obtain the agricultural inputs they need in a predictable way, enabling them to increase their share of the value derived from their produce as it is stored, transported, processed and marketed, and ensuring that they are supported during periods when access to specific nutrients is compromised. Over the past year, the importance of nutritional security has become more widely accepted, in view of evidence showing that even when communities experience increases in their overall food production, the prevalence of undernourished children remains high.[13] As the Framework's emphasis on comprehensive approaches has become more relevant, policymakers have recently sought ways to link agriculture, food security and nutritional outcomes.

27. In May 2010, a dialogue on the Comprehensive Framework for Action provided an opportunity for interested parties to engage with the resource group responsible for updating the Framework, and offer suggestions on its contents and presentation. More than 150 representatives of international and regional organizations; non-governmental organizations; smallholder farmers organizations from Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe; and Member States contributed to a process designed to produce an updated Comprehensive Framework for Action that is more adapted to today's realities and takes into account the full spectrum of actions needed to achieve food and nutrition security for all.

28. The discussion among stakeholders was based on a draft version of the Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action that reflected comments received on the original Framework from 51 entities,[14] and participants welcomed the opportunity to broaden the overall scope of the Framework and emphasize the role of women, nutrition and the right to food.[15] They also called for increased attention to be devoted to the defects underlying the structures of the world's food systems, including the failure of agricultural development to reflect the interests of smallholder farmers and agricultural labourers in many less developed nations, the poor performance of conventional food markets, the damage caused by ongoing volatility in prices of food and agricultural inputs, the adverse impact of speculation

[12] High-level Task Force progress report, November 2009, available at http://un-foodsecurity.org/sites/default/files/09progressreport.pdf.

[13] High-level Task Force, Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action, Dublin Draft, May 2010, foreword, available at http://un-foodsecurity.org/sites/default/files/2010_CFA_updatd_web_lowres-1.pdf.

[14] Available at www.updatecfa.com.

[15] The right to adequate food and the fundamental right to be free from hunger are recognized under article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and under article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

on food commodities, the debilitating nature of unfair food subsidy and trading practices, and the fragility of global mechanisms for food governance.

29. The draft Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action produced from this consultative process was published in May 2010. It is still based on a twin-track approach, but includes a wider range of views and a fuller treatment of all aspects of food and nutrition security. It reflects the outcomes of the World Food Summit, including the five Rome Principles. It takes into account the need to accord greater priority to the protection of those who are least able to enjoy their rights to food, environmental sustainability, gender equity and the prerequisites for improved nutrition. It acknowledges that while States have a primary role in ensuring food and nutrition security for all, a multiplicity of other actors have vital contributions to make.[13]

L'Aquila Food Security Initiative

30. The L'Aquila Food Security Initiative established by the Group of Eight (G-8) in July 2009 pledged $20 billion towards efforts to "partner with vulnerable countries and regions to help them develop and implement their own food security strategies, and together substantially increase our commitments of financial and technical assistance".[16] Supported by the leaders of 26 countries and 14 organizations, including the High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, the Committee on World Food Security, FAO, the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Bank and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, the initiative identifies food security, safety nets, nutrition and sustainable agriculture as being political imperatives to be pursued within an evolving context of supply uncertainties and price volatility.

31. The L'Aquila Food Security Initiative links food and nutrition security to climate change adaptation and mitigation measures; sustainable natural resource management, including biodiversity protection; responses to the interests of women farmers and their communities; and social protection systems that ensure that the most vulnerable have access to food and nutrients. Importantly, the Initiative envisages strong multilateral action in support of country-led processes that are driven by national authorities with increased levels of financial assistance that are both sustained and predictable. It also calls for effective coordination among all stakeholders.

32. The L'Aquila Food Security Initiative works as a part of the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, a global partnership that was originally proposed to address the issues of agriculture and food in 2008 and was later expanded to include food security and nutrition at the High-level Meeting on Food Security for All, held in Madrid in January 2009. As discussions on the Global Partnership continued at the FAO conference held in November 2008, the G-8 L'Aquila Summit in July 2009 and at the Group of Twenty (G-20) Summit held in Pittsburgh in September 2009, the Partnership continues to develop and is contributing to the work of the reformed Committee on World Food Security.

33. In November 2009, representatives of private-sector companies involved in the Global Partnership met in Milan and indicated their capacity to help increase farmer productivity and their wish to help smallholders derive benefits from quality

[16] Available at www.ifad.org/events/g8.

improvements, processing and marketing. That led to the development of a New Vision for Agriculture,[17] led by a Project Board selected from the World Economic Forum (WEF) Consumer Industries Community, with advisory support from the Forum's Global Agenda Council on Food Security and high-level leaders of industry, Governments, academic institutions and civil society. The New Vision for Agriculture was formally established in 2010 with the purpose of deepening public-private collaboration so as to accelerate growth in sustainable agriculture.

Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme

34. On the basis of discussions held on a global food security initiative in L'Aquila, leaders at the G-20 summit held in September 2009 decided to call on the World Bank Group to work with interested donors and organizations to develop a multilateral trust fund to scale up agricultural assistance to low-income countries.[18] The Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme was subsequently established at the World Bank in April 2010 as a fiduciary intermediary fund that seeks to help countries in their quest to ensure the long-term growth and sustainability of smallholder farms. It currently holds approximately $950 million in secure pledges, with contributions from Spain, Canada, the United States, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Republic of Korea, and it is expected that a total of $1 billion to $1.5 billion will be received over the next three years.

35. Several other initiatives continue to help in improving the mobilization and coordination of official development assistance (ODA) in support of food and nutrition security: the World Bank's Global Food Crisis Support Programme, a $2 billion initiative launched in 2008 to mitigate the initial shock of high food prices on vulnerable groups, and the European Union Food Security Facility, which has committed €1 billion to projects worldwide, working through the United Nations, the World Bank and non-governmental organizations.[19]

Outcomes of the World Summit on Food Security

36. In November 2009, FAO convened the World Summit on Food Security at its headquarters in Rome, which was attended by 60 Heads of State and Government and 192 Ministers from 182 countries and the European Community. Participants unanimously adopted a Declaration pledging a renewed commitment to fight hunger and embracing the five L'Aquila principles, newly coined as the "Rome Principles". FAO members endorsed the revitalization of the Committee on World Food Security so as to make it a more inclusive international platform.

37. A number of events were held in the month prior to the Summit, and their outcomes contributed to the success of the Summit itself. FAO organized a high-level expert forum on the theme "How to feed the world in 2050", the Committee on World Food Security met over a four-day period to discuss its reforms, and World Food Day was held on 16 October. Additionally, in the days just before the Summit, a private-sector forum was convened in Milan, and both an inter-parliamentary

[17] See http://www.weforum.org/en/initiatives/AgricultureandFoodSecurity/index.htm.

[18] See http://www.worldbank.org/gafsp.

[19] High-level Task Force Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action, Dublin Draft, May 2010, p. 44, available at http://un-foodsecurity.org/sites/default/files/2010_CFA_updatd_web_lowres-1.pdf.

meeting and a civil society forum[20] were convened in Rome, to provide their views and input for the discussions.

38. The Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security includes four strategic objectives: (a) to fully realize the targets of Millennium Development Goal 1 and the 1996 World Food Summit goal;[21] (b) to work within the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition and fully implement the reform of the Committee on World Food Security; (c) to reverse the decline in domestic and international funding for agriculture, food security and rural development in developing countries, and promote new investment to increase sustainable agricultural production and productivity, reduce poverty and work towards achieving food security and access to food for all; and (d) to proactively face the challenges posed by climate change to food security and to increase the resilience of agricultural producers to climate change, with particular attention to small agricultural producers and vulnerable populations.

39. To achieve the agreed strategic objectives as defined above, World Summit leaders decided to base their commitments and actions on what they declared as the Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security:

(a) Invest in country-owned plans, aimed at channelling resources to well-designed and results-based programmes and partnerships;

(b) Foster strategic coordination at the national, regional and global levels to improve governance, promote the better allocation of resources, avoid duplication of efforts and identify response gaps;

(c) Strive for a comprehensive twin-track approach to food security that consists of: (1) direct action to immediately tackle hunger for the most vulnerable and (2) medium- and long-term sustainable agricultural, food security, nutrition and rural development programmes to eliminate the root causes of hunger and poverty, including through the progressive realization of the right to adequate food;

(d) Ensure a strong role for the multilateral system by sustained improvements in the efficiency, responsiveness, coordination and effectiveness of multilateral institutions;

(e) Ensure sustained and substantial commitment by all partners to investment in agriculture and food security and nutrition, with the provision of necessary resources in a timely and reliable fashion, aimed at multi-year plans and programmes.

40. Faced with the food crisis and an underperforming Committee on World Food Security, FAO member States agreed at the thirty-fourth session of the Committee, held in October 2008, to embark on a reform, aimed at enabling the Committee to realize its vital role in the area of food security and nutrition, including international coordination. The reformed Committee is expanding participation so as to ensure that the voices of all relevant stakeholders are heard in the policy debate on food and agriculture; adapting its rules and procedures with the aim of becoming the central United Nations political platform dealing with food security and nutrition; strengthening its linkages at the regional, national and local levels; and supporting

[20] See http://peoplesforum2009.foodsovereignty.org/.

[21] To reduce, respectively, the proportion and the number of people who suffer from hunger and malnutrition by half by 2015.

Committee discussions with structured expertise through the creation of a High-level Panel of Experts to ensure that the decisions and the work of the Committee are based on hard evidence and state-of-the-art knowledge.[22]

41. The Committee on World Food Security remains an intergovernmental Committee in FAO, with an advisory group including FAO, WFP, IFAD, the Gates Foundation, the High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, the High-level Panel of Experts, and other private, research, philanthropic and financial institutions. As a central component of the evolving Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, the reformed Committee envisions that it will constitute the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a coordinated manner and in support of country-led processes towards the elimination of hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all human beings.

42. At the same time, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the Global Forum on Agricultural Research are being reformed to represent and respond better to the interests of farmers in poorer countries, and deliver new insights and technologies that benefit them.

Implementing the decisions taken by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its seventeenth session

43. Following the outcome of the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in 2009, the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs decided to closely monitor the implementation of the agreed decisions related to agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa by organizing a Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Implementing Sustainable Development, which convened in February 2010 at Headquarters in New York. That was the first time that such a dialogue was organized outside the regular session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

44. The dialogue was held in the spirit of ensuring a more effective and coordinated implementation of the decisions made at the seventeenth session and raised awareness about innovative methods and tools for strengthening the capacities of farmers and promoting the need to develop partnerships. There was a general consensus during the daylong discussion on the need to develop a fast-track strategy to advance the implementation of the Commission's decisions in general and for the scaling up of successful practices in particular.[23]

45. A notable example of partnerships highlighted during the multi-stakeholder dialogue was the Farming First coalition, a group of 131 civil society organizations representing farmers, scientists, engineers and industry. It was developed in response to the challenges presented at the seventeenth session of the Commission, and illustrates the value of multi-stakeholder collaboration, as it acknowledges the specific concerns of each of those sectors while building consensus and a common

[22] FAO Committee on World Food Security, thirty-fifth session, Rome, October 2009; agenda item III: Reform of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS:2009/2), available from http://www.fao.org.

[23] The summary report is available at http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res_pdfs/csd-18/csd18_2010_bp14.pdf.

framework for future action. Governments welcomed the Farming First initiative, noting its potential to raise awareness about the collective contributions of some of the most important agricultural and rural stakeholders, namely, farmers and cooperatives, researchers and extension workers, companies and entrepreneurs.[24]

Scaling up Nutrition Framework

46. One important extension of the global effort to increase food security over the past year has been an increased awareness of the problem of undernutrition and the neglect of the issue of nutrition in development strategies. Few Governments have sought to prioritize undernutrition as a development problem in their national development plans, and of those that do, only half have actually included budget allocations for explicit nutrition activities. One reason for this omission is that neither the economic consequences of undernutrition, nor the comparatively low cost of acting to prevent them, are well recognized.[25] In 2010, more stakeholders are putting the issue of nutrition higher on the agenda, and there has been increasing political interest in a multipartner initiative for tackling undernutrition.

47. In response, a policy brief entitled "Scaling-up Nutrition: A Framework for Action" was published in 2010, as the product of a broad informal partnership and intensive programme of work that included a series of consultations hosted by the Centre for Global Development, the International Conference on Nutrition, the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition, the United States Agency for International Development, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Bank; many developing country partners, civil society organizations, bilateral partners, the United Nations and multilateral agencies were also involved.

48. The Scaling up Nutrition Framework calls for two complementary approaches to reducing undernutrition. The first involves direct, nutrition-specific interventions focusing on pregnant women and children under age 2 using short-term direct interventions that are known to be effective, such as the promotion of good nutritional practices, micronutrients and complementary feeding to prevent and treat undernutrition. The second approach is a broader multisectoral nutrition-sensitive approach to development that acts to counter the determinants of undernutrition, specifically by promoting agriculture and food security to improve the availability of, access to and consumption of nutritious foods by improving social protection and by ensuring access to health care.

49. The policy brief is designed as a public good that describes the interventions that must be implemented at near to universal coverage to achieve a public health impact, and its policies will continue to evolve through future consultation meetings hosted by the World Health Organization and WFP. A meeting of stakeholders involved in the Framework was held at the Nutrition Forum held in Rome in June 2010, at which participants agreed to develop an action plan that responded both to the needs of populations at risk and to the interests of all stakeholders in the Framework process. The first phase of the action plan will take the form of a road map setting out pathways for moving forward and will be reviewed by stakeholders before the summit on the Millennium Development Goals.

---

[24] See http://www.farmingfirst.org/.

[25] Policy brief, *Scaling Up Nutrition: A Framework for Action*, David Nabarro, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Food Security and Nutrition (revised April 2010), available at http://un-foodsecurity.org/node/529.

High-level review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals

50. In September 2010, the General Assembly will convene the summit on the Millennium Development Goals, a High-level Plenary Meeting whose primary objective will be to accelerate progress towards all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, taking into account the progress made towards the internationally agreed development goals (see resolution 64/184). The summit is expected to undertake a comprehensive review of successes, best practices and lessons learned; identify obstacles, gaps, challenges and opportunities; and produce concrete strategies for action.

51. By linking the Millennium Development Goals to the internationally agreed development agenda, world leaders and development partners have recognized the existence of synergies among the various development goals and targets as well as the need for an integrated approach to their achievement. Agriculture development and food security are closely tied to both Goal 1 and Goal 7, and, as momentum builds towards the summit, many activities are under way to ensure that the importance of food security is appropriately reflected and that a comprehensive approach to sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition is promoted as part of achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

B. Progress at the regional level

52. A great deal of progress has been made at the regional level as funds from the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative have been released and put to use, particularly in the Africa region, where assistance is most needed.

Africa

53. A series of consultations and workshops conducted with farmers' organizations throughout the region since 2005 are bearing fruit in 2010, and the role of farmers' organizations is increasingly recognized in the context of CAADP.[26] This consultative process represented the first efforts towards joint activities among regional networks of farmer organizations and was followed by further continent-wide advocacy activities aimed at the planned creation in 2010 of a pan-African platform of farmers' organizations and producers. There is now a proposal for formal recognition of the platform by the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

54. National federations of farmers' organizations have been formed so as to enable them to be increasingly well-positioned in the political dialogue with emerging regional economic communities, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community. These regional networks are increasingly working with a certain autonomy based on membership contributions, and they are entirely directed by representatives elected by the members. Through the affiliated national

[26] IFAD, *Farmers Speak Out: The Vision and Recommendations of Africa's Farmers' Organizations for the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme*, available at http://www.ifad.org/pub/pa/farmers.pdf

platforms, they represent farmers' organizations from 30 sub-Saharan African countries and millions of small farmers — the Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest alone represents 45 million farmers in West Africa. More than 40 per cent of the membership base of the four networks is composed of women farmers and organizations of women producers.

55. Although implementation of CAADP in Africa has been uneven owing to weak communications and coordination with member States, regional economic communities, and numerous stakeholders, as well as lack of support for country round-table processes, momentum is growing as the anticipated increases in the funding available for agricultural development in Africa are aligned to support CAADP implementation. By the end of 2009, CAADP compacts had been signed in 9 of the 16 ECOWAS countries, as well as in Burundi, Rwanda and Ethiopia — for a total of 12 countries.[27] Maintaining and accelerating this momentum will clearly depend on the translation of priorities into practical investment programmes and financial support that yield results on the ground for farmers.

56. In September 2010, Ghana will host the African Green Revolution Forum, aimed at promoting investments and policy support for driving agricultural productivity and income growth for African farmers in an environmentally sustainable way. The Forum is a private-sector-led initiative that will bring together African heads of State, ministers, farmers, private agribusiness firms, financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society and scientists to discuss and develop concrete investment plans for achieving the green revolution in Africa.[28] The Forum will be co-sponsored by the highly successful Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa[29] and Chaired by Kofi Annan, who serves as the Alliance's Chairman of the Board.

Other regional initiatives and actions

57. The World Summit on Food Security recognized and supported similar efforts in other regions, such as the Latin America and the Caribbean without Hunger 2025 initiative and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Integrated Food Security Framework.

58. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the main cause of hunger is not lack of food but the unequal distribution of and the lack of access to food by the poorest people. The region is actually the biggest exporter of food on the planet, with an estimated food surplus of 30 per cent in addition to its exports.[30] The Latin America and the Caribbean without Hunger 2025 initiative aims to eradicate hunger and malnutrition and guarantee food security in the region, in accordance with Millennium Development Goal 1, and to reduce chronic child malnutrition to a minimum level, below 2.5 per cent, in all participating countries. Proposed in 2005 by Brazil and Guatemala, the Initiative belongs to all countries in the region and is supported and coordinated by FAO.

---

[27] Ibid.

[28] See http://agrforum.com/.

[29] See http://www.agra-alliance.org/.

[30] FAO, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean *Hunger-free Latin America and the Caribbean initiative*, available at http://www.rlc.fao.org/iniciativa/pdf/brochure.pdf.

59. In February 2009, ASEAN developed and endorsed the ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework, supported by the Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN Region, as a five-year project aimed at ensuring long-term food security and improving the livelihoods of farmers in the region. Partnership and cooperation arrangements with international organizations (primarily FAO), donor agencies, the private sector, industry associations and the wider community at the regional and national levels is actively sought to ensure the participation of all stakeholders. After one year of implementation, strategic areas of focus include: strengthening food security arrangements at the national and regional levels; promoting favourable conditions in the food market and trade; obtaining sound and timely food security information for planning and management; broadening agricultural innovation for food security; and addressing the impacts of climate change.[31]

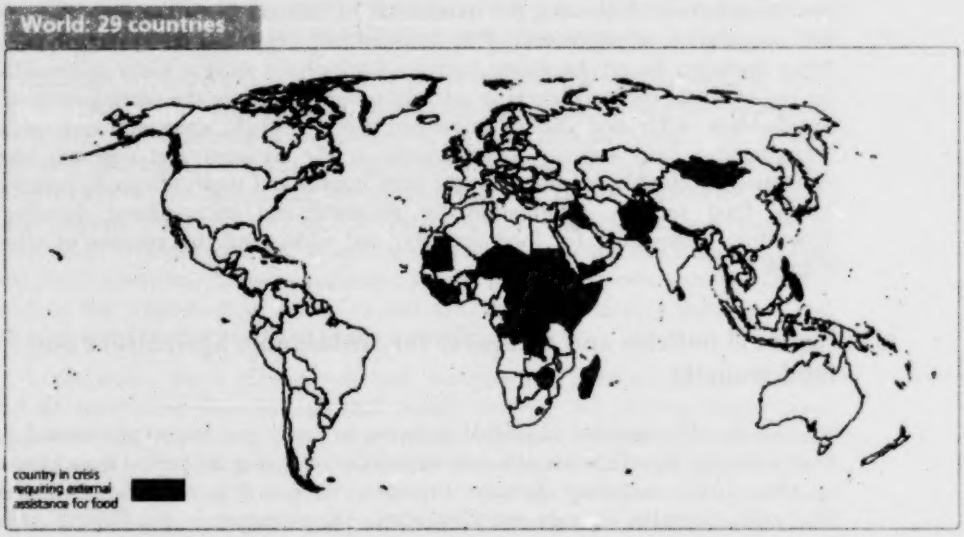
C. National policies and measures for sustainable agriculture and food security

60. Of the 29 countries identified as being in crisis and requiring external food assistance (see fig. II), some noted an improvement during the period from February to May 2010, including Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Six countries — the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea and Mongolia — experienced a deterioration in their situation in the same period, owing in large part to civil strife or climate-related events. Madagascar is included on the crisis list as a new entry as a result of drought-reduced crops in 2010.[3]

61. To assist those countries most in need, initiatives at both the regional and country levels are under way and are leading, in some cases, to significant progress, with national food security investment plans involving the government, civil society and private-sector and international development partners. For example, meetings of the Rwanda Food Security Investment Forum (December 2010), the Bangladesh Food Security Investment Forum (May 2010), the Haiti Forum (June 2010) and the ECOWAS business meeting on the financing of plans for investing in food security (June 2010) are notable efforts that build on the work already under way through national round tables and compacts.

[31] ASEAN Integrated Food Security Framework and Strategic Plan of Action on Food Security in the ASEAN Region 2009-2013, available at http://www.aseansec.org/22338.pdf.

Figure II
Countries requiring external assistance for food



Source: Global Information and Early Warning System, "Crop Prospects and Food Situation", No. 2, May 2010.

Emergency response: Haiti, Rwanda, Bangladesh

62. Following the devastating earthquake in January 2010, WFP, FAO and IFAD reported on the response to food insecurity in Haiti and emphasized the need for well-coordinated action during the emergency and recovery phase. One month later, a High-level Meeting on Food Security and Nutrition in Haiti was convened in Rome to discuss how United Nations agencies, donors and Governments could support Haitian-led agricultural development, food security and the nutrition planning process in the medium and long term. As of March 2010, almost 3 million people, more than 30 per cent of the national population, did not have adequate access to food.[3] In June 2010, Haiti received $35 million from the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme to help raise the productivity of smallholder farmers, especially women, by improving access to seeds, fertilizers and technology.

63. In Rwanda, agriculture is the backbone of the economy, accounting for about 39 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) and 90 per cent of the country's food needs. It also generates about 63 per cent of total export revenues. The country estimates that consistent growth rates of 8 per cent or more in agriculture will allow Rwanda to successfully meet Millennium Development Goal 1.[32] Rwanda was the first country to sign the CAADP compact, led by the Government with the participation of, and growing alignment among, all partners, including civil society, businesses, bilateral donors, development banks and United Nations agencies,

[32] "Five Countries Receive Food Security Support Through Multi-Donor Fund", June 2010, available at http://www.un-foodsecurity.org/node/596.

through the working group on agriculture co-led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources and the World Bank.

64. In the context of the country-led process in Rwanda, efforts to achieve food security are intensifying, and the country has been praised for its success in engaging all partners in discussions around a central policy document; establishing a sector-wide approach; designing and implementing successful programmes; and increasing the budget for agriculture from 3 to 6 per cent, and soon to 9 per cent, in accordance with the Maputo Declaration.[33] A new investment plan, developed late in 2009, informs Government partners on plans and programmes for food security, including on what has been financed and what remains to be financed and supported.[34] In June 2010, the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme invested $50 million to transform hillside agriculture by reducing erosion and bolstering productivity in an environmentally sustainable manner.

65. Through its Vision 2021,[35] Bangladesh foresees itself becoming a middle-income country, with agricultural production as the core area of growth. Rice self-sufficiency is one of the goals for food security. While Bangladesh has become less dependent on food aid and has nearly tripled its rice production, many of the poorest people remain malnourished and do not have consistent access to food. Of 160 million people, 60 million are food-insecure, and micronutrient malnutrition affects nearly 30 million women and 12 million children under age 5, while 3 million children under age 5 are acutely malnourished.[36]

66. During the Bangladesh Food Security Investment Forum, held in May 2010, a country investment plan was discussed that would help to achieve and sustain food security. The plan is a comprehensive and integrated set of programmes linking the three dimensions of food security — food availability, access to food and utilization of nutrients — and focuses on agriculture, water management, fisheries and livestock, the value chain, the public food-distribution system, safety nets, nutrition and food safety. In support of this country-led effort, the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme invested $50 million in June 2010 to enhance productivity and the resilience of smallholder farmers in the face of tidal surges, flash floods and frequent droughts, and finance the adoption of improved seed varieties and better water-management techniques.

Boosting farmer productivity: Malawi

67. Many are calling the shift made by Malawi this year from food-aid dependence to exporter of maize a "miracle" that is due to the success of Government-subsidized chemical fertilizers and hybrid maize seeds that were distributed to smallholder farmers. While Government investment in local food production is crucial for sustainable agriculture and rural development, this success story has generated debate to the effect that the "technical fix" of subsidies for imported

[33] Under the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa, African Governments agreed to increase public investment in agriculture to a minimum of 10 per cent of their national budgets and achieve the target of increasing agricultural growth to 6 per cent per annum.

[34] Nabarro, David, statement to the Rwanda CAADP Post-Compact Meeting, December 2009.

[35] Bangladesh Vision 2021, available at http://www.cpd-bangladesh.org/Policy%20Brief/sub%20folders/downloads/Vision_2021_English.pdf.

[36] Nabarro, David, statement on achieving and sustaining food security in Bangladesh, Bangladesh Food Security Investment Forum, May 2010.

fertilizers and seeds would prevail only in the short term[37] and that longer-term success for a truly sustainable green revolution in Africa will require smallholder farmers to have access to enough land as well as access to agricultural markets, so as to be able to make a decent living and produce surpluses in a sustainable manner.

68. In response to the Malawi grain surplus, WFP bought 50 tons of maize in July 2010 from the Grain and Legumes Association, a farmers' organization made up of more than 95,000 smallholder farmers, as part of the agency's Purchase for Progress initiative, which buys surplus from local farmers' organizations for its aid operations, thereby helping to boost agricultural production and incomes in developing nations. Farmers' organizations have, in turn, used their profits to boost production and increase food security, including by investing some of their earnings in seeds and fertilizers for the next harvest. It is estimated that by 2013, at least half a million smallholder farmers — mostly women — will have increased and improved their agricultural production and earnings as a result of this initiative, which was launched in 2008 and is now active in 21 countries. In addition to supporting the commodity exchange, the initiative is also buying directly from farmers' organizations and helping them to meet market standards.[38]

IV. The way forward: maintaining the global momentum on a comprehensive approach to achieve food security through agricultural development

69. Overall, there is an increasing harmonization among multiple stakeholders at the international level, providing a useful organizational architecture for regional and national efforts. The Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition provides a conceptual home, the High-level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis encourages coordination and synergy, the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme provides a means for streamlining financial support, the WEF New Vision for Agriculture and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa both stimulate joint work by the private and public sectors, the reformed Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research system streamlines research, and the revitalized Committee on World Food Security improves the overall governance of food security work. All those actors face the challenge of finding ways in which their different elements can be helped to mesh together and to do so through measures that support the realization of agreed outcomes at the global and national levels.[39]

70. At a High-level Meeting on the theme "Partnering for food security", convened in September 2009, the Secretary-General proposed steps to move the internationally agreed principles on food security into action, calling on Governments to advance effective country-led and regional strategies; develop country investment plans and programmes to achieve the goals of those strategies; ensure mutual accountability through public benchmarks, indicators and a peer

[37] GRAIN, "Unravelling the 'Miracle' of Malawi's Green Revolution", January 2010, available at http://www.grain.org/seedling_files/seed-10-01-1.pdf.

[38] "Small-scale farmers in Malawi latest beneficiaries under United Nations local purchase scheme", July 2010, available at http://www.un-foodsecurity.org/node/626.

[39] Nabarro, David, notes from presentation on food security, G-8 Development Ministers' Meeting, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 28 April 2010.

review framework to measure progress; and develop a flexible financing architecture that includes well-coordinated bilateral and multilateral mechanisms to support country-led strategies and investment plans. He further expressed support for the expansion of North-South, South-South and trilateral cooperation for the development and implementation of comprehensive plans, country-led and called on world leaders to work with regional economic communities, associations, organizations and agencies to strengthen mechanisms for financial and technical cooperation with donors and other stakeholders to facilitate regional economic integration.[40]

71. Ensuring broad ownership and inclusiveness is essential to achieving food and nutrition security, and wider, outcome-focused partnerships are increasingly seen as the way forward. The requirement that different initiatives be harmonized and work in synergy places a substantial burden on those responsible for leadership and coordination. Signs of polarization between Governments and new multi-donor funding mechanisms, as well as the intensive promotion of country-led processes that may not be aligned with donor timetables and agendas, will present challenges in future if the global process is to be truly country-led and sustain the inclusiveness that characterizes the L'Aquila statement and the Rome Principles.[39]

72. Without substantial additional investment and better policies in support of smallholder agriculture, many of the poorest countries will not reach the targets of Millennium Development Goal 1. Consequently, there is a need to increase spending on agricultural production, through official development assistance, foreign direct investment and national budget support. Solutions to agricultural and rural problems are most successful in the context of consistent, well-integrated national and subregional policies that take into account the constraints of national, subregional and international environments. Rural organizations must therefore secure the means to participate in and influence mechanisms and policy options in those areas.

73. A review of the many efforts currently under way, as set out above, suggests that while the level of coordination and communication has increased among stakeholders invested in and affected by the food crisis, it remains to be seen whether the momentum of such processes will succeed in effecting meaningful, long-term changes for poor smallholder farmers in developing countries, especially for women in countries that currently require food assistance.

[40] "Partnering for Food Security: Moving Forward: a proposal from United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton", available at http://www.un.org/issues/food/taskforce/pdf/Partnering%20for%20Food%20Security%20-%20Moving%20forward.pdf.